

### ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An apparatus and method to increase effective data connection bandwidth by splitting/allocating data streams seamlessly and simultaneously across multiple connections. The apparatus providing for multi-tasking and switching of data between a plurality of bi-directional and/or download-only bandwidth channels for use by a plurality of end-user devices. The apparatus having decision-making means for allocating the various bandwidth channels to the appropriate data transfer tasks thereby maximizing the use of all available channels. This improves over the current prevailing scenario whereby each device has a single dedicated connection. One example of the invention is a set-top box that accepts data from satellite, modem, cable, DSL, ISDN, internet, or other inputs and routes the data to various computers, televisions, telephones, and/or stereo devices